1. (Amended) A computer-implemented meta search engine method, comprising the steps of:

forwarding a query to a plurality of third party search engines;

receiving and processing in parallel responses from the third party search engines, said responses identifying documents in response to the query, said processing including the steps of,

(a) downloading the full text of the documents identified in response to the query, and

(b) locating query terms in the documents and extracting text surrounding the query terms to form at least one context string; and

progressively displaying information regarding the documents, and the at least one context string surrounding one or more of the query terms for each processed document containing the query terms.

3. (Amended) A method according to Claim 1, further including the step of filtering the context strings in order to improve readability by removing redundant whitespace, repeated characters, HTML comments and tags, and special characters.

4. (Amended) A method according to Claim 1, further including the step of identifying and displaying a list of documents identified in response to the query which do not contain any of the query terms.

12. (Amended) A method according to Claim 1, further including the step of detecting and

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displaying duplicate documents by identifying duplicate context strings.

14. (Amended) A method according to Claim 1, further including the step of displaying suggested additional query terms for expanding the query based on terms in the documents identified in response to the query .

15. (Amended) A method according to Claim 1, after all responses have been processed, further including the step of using a ranking scheme to re-rank documents according to the number of and proximity between query terms, and re-displaying the information regarding the documents according to the ranking.

16. (Amended) A computer-implemented meta search engine method, comprising the steps of:

forwarding a query to a third party search engine;

receiving and processing in parallel responses from the third party search engine, said responses identifying documents in response to the query, said processing including the steps of,

(a) downloading the full text of the documents identified in response to the query, and

(b) locating query terms in the documents and extracting text surrounding the query terms to form at least one context string; and

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progressively displaying information regarding the documents, and the at least

one context string surrounding one or more of the query terms for each processed document

containing the query terms.

19. (Amended) A method according to Claim 16, further including the step of identifying and

displaying a list of documents identified in response to the query which do not contain any of

the query terms.

26. (Amended) A method according to Claim 16, further including the step of detecting and

displaying duplicate documents by identifying duplicate context strings.

28. (Amended) A method according to Claim 16, further including the step of displaying

suggested additional query terms for expanding the query based on terms in the documents

identified in response to the query.

29. (Amended) A method according to Claim 16, after all responses have been processed,

further including the step of using a ranking scheme to re-rank documents according to the

number of and proximity between query terms, and re-displaying the information regarding

. the documents according to the ranking.

46. (Amended) A computer-implemented meta search engine method, comprising the steps

of:

     means for forwarding a query to a third party search engine;

-4-

means for receiving and processing in parallel responses from the third party search engine, said responses identifying documents in response to the query, said processing including the steps of,

(a) means for downloading the full text of the documents identified in response to the query, and

(b) means for locating query terms in the documents and extracting text surrounding the query terms to form at least one context string; and

means for progressively displaying information regarding the documents, and the at least one context string surrounding one or more of the query terms for each processed document containing the query terms.

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49. (Amended) A meta search engine according to Claim 46, further including the step of identifying and displaying a list of documents identified in response to the query which do not contain any of the query terms.

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52. (Amended) A computer-implemented meta search engine method, comprising the steps of:

means for forwarding a query to a third party search engine;

means for receiving and processing in parallel responses from the third party search engine, said responses identifying documents in response to the query, said processing including the steps of,

(a) means for downloading the full text of the documents identified in response to the query, and

(b) means for locating query terms in the documents and extracting text surrounding the query terms to form at least one context string; and

means for progressively displaying information regarding the documents, and the at least one context string surrounding one or more of the query terms for each processed document containing the query terms.

55. (Amended) A meta search engine according to Claim 52, further including the step of identifying and displaying a list of documents identified in response to the query which do not contain any of the query terms.

Please add the following new claims:

80. (New) The method of Claim 1, further including the step of transforming the query from a form of a question into a form of an answer prior to forwarding the query to the plurality of third party search engines.

81. (New) The method of Claim 1, wherein the step of progressively displaying includes displaying an indication of how close the query terms are to each other in the documents.

82. (New) The method of Claim 1, after the progressively displaying step, further including the steps:

-6-

(a) displaying the information regarding the documents and the at least one context string for a predetermined number of documents ranked using term proximity information;

(b) displaying the information regarding the documents and the at least one context string for documents that which contain less than all the query terms;

(c) displaying the information regarding the documents that contain none of the query terms;

(d) displaying information regarding the documents and the at least one context string for documents that contain duplicate context strings to documents displayed earlier; and

(e) displaying the information regarding the documents that could not be downloaded.

83. (New) The method of Claim 82, further including the step displaying suggested additional query terms for expanding the query based on terms in the documents identified in response to the query.

84. (New) The method of Claim 84, further including the step of displaying summary information regarding the documents found and processed, the summary information being separately identified for each search engine.

85. (New) The method of Claim 5, wherein the step of clustering comprises for each processed document the steps of:

(a) for n = 1 to MaximumPhraseLength, for each set of successive n words , if this combination of words has not already appeared in this document, then add the set to a hash table for this document and a hash table for all documents;

(b) for n = MaximumPhraseLength to 1, find the most common phrases of length n, to a maximum of MaxN phrases, which occurred more than MinN times, and add these phrases to the set of clusters;

(c) find the most common combination of two clusters form the previous step, to a maximum of maxC combinations, for which the combination occurred in individual documents at least MinC times;

(d) delete clusters which are identified by phrases which are subset of a phrase identifying another cluster;

(e) merge clusters which contain identical documents; and

(f) display each cluster along with at least one context string form a set of documents for both the query terms and the cluster terms.

86. (New) A computer-implemented meta search engine method, comprising the steps of:

forwarding a query to a plurality of third party search engines;

receiving and processing responses from the third party search engines, said responses identifying documents in response to the query, said processing including the steps of,

(a) downloading the full text of the documents identified in response to the query, and

-8-

(b) locating query terms in the documents and extracting text surrounding the query terms to form at least one context string;

displaying information regarding the documents, and the at least one context string surrounding one or more of the query terms for each processed document containing the query terms; and

clustering the documents based on analysis of the full text of each document and identification of co-occurring phrases and words, and conjunctions thereof and displaying the information regarding the documents arranged by said clusters.

87. (New) A computer-implemented meta search engine method, comprising the steps of:

forwarding a query to a plurality of third party search engines;

receiving and processing responses from the third party search engines, said responses identifying documents in response to the query, said processing including the steps of,

(a) downloading the full text of the documents identified in response to the query, and

(b) locating query terms in the documents and extracting text surrounding the query terms to form at least one context string;

displaying information regarding the documents, and the at least one context string surrounding one or more of the query terms for each processed document containing the query terms; and

displaying suggested additional query terms for expanding the query based on terms in the documents identified in response to the query.

-9-

88. (New) A computer-implemented meta search engine method, comprising the steps of:

receiving a query and transforming the query from a form of a question into a form of an answer;

forwarding the transformed query to a plurality of third party search engines;

receiving and processing responses from the third party search engines, said responses identifying documents in response to the query, said processing including the steps of,

(a) downloading the full text of the documents identified in response to the query, and

(b) locating query terms in the documents and extracting text surrounding the query terms to form at least one context string; and

displaying information regarding the documents, and the at least one context string surrounding one or more of the query terms for each processed document containing the query terms.

89. (New) A computer-implemented meta search engine method, comprising the steps of:

forwarding a query to a plurality of third party search engines;

receiving and processing responses from the third party search engines, said responses identifying documents in response to the query, said processing including the steps of,

(a) downloading the full text of the documents identified in response to the query, and

-10-